

In the claims

1. (currently amended) ~~An exercise apparatus~~ A method of performing abdominal muscle exercise, comprising the steps of:

providing a frame configured to rest on a floor surface;
mounting a seat ~~mounted~~ on a first portion of the frame;
pivotally mounting an upper body support ~~pivotally mounted~~ on a ~~first~~ discrete, second portion of the frame, thereby defining for pivoting about a first pivot axis on the frame, and arranging the upper body support to extending generally vertically upward in front of the seat;

pivotally mounting a lower body support ~~pivotally mounted~~ on a ~~second~~ discrete, third portion of the frame, thereby defining for pivoting about a second pivot axis on the frame, and arranging the lower body support to extending generally horizontally outward beneath the upper body support and forward of the seat; ~~and~~

~~a link pivotally interconnected between the lower body support and the upper body support in a manner that constrains~~
constraining the upper body support and the lower body support to pivot toward one another, and in respective, opposite directions relative to both the frame and the seat; and

sitting on the seat and exercising one's abdominal muscles by performing any combination of pushing the upper body support downward relative to the seat and lifting the lower body support upward relative to the seat.

2. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, wherein ~~a forward end of~~ the lower body support ~~has is~~ provided with a forward end having upper and lower foot engaging portions configured and arranged to accommodate a person's feet therebetween, and further comprising the step of placing one's feet on top of the lower foot engaging portions and beneath the upper foot engaging portions.

3. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, wherein a universal joint is provided in an intermediate portion of the upper body support, and further comprising the step of rotating an upper portion of the upper body support about multiple non-parallel axes relative to a lower portion of the upper body support while pushing downward on the upper body support.

4. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, wherein the seat is rigidly ~~connected to~~ secured in place on the first portion of the frame.

5. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, further comprising the step of interconnecting a resistance device ~~interconnected~~ between the frame and the upper body support.

6. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 5, wherein the resistance device is disposed entirely beneath a planform defined by the seat.

7. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, wherein each said pivot axis is arranged to extend beneath a planform defined by the seat.

8. (currently amended) The ~~exercise apparatus~~ method of claim 1, wherein the upper body support is configured and arranged to be centered transversely relative to the seat, and ~~is configured and arranged~~ to accommodate a person's legs on opposite sides thereof, and the sitting step involves straddling the upper body support.

9. (cancelled)

10. (newly added) The method of claim 1, wherein the upper body support is provided with a lower distal end that is arranged to extend rearward of the first pivot axis and beneath a planform defined by the seat, and further comprising the step of interconnecting a resistance device between the frame and the lower distal end.